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THE LITTLE GOLDEN FOUNTAIN

AND OTHER VERSES

BY
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Author of Short Plays

CINCINNATI
STEWART & KIDD COMPANY

1916

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There has been no scheme of arrangement. It seemed impossible. But with some exceptions the later things are in the latter part of the book and most of the free verse forms have been done recently.

The Little Golden Fountain

Oh, my heart is a little golden fountain,
Through it and spilling over the brim
Wells the love of you.
Brighter gleams the gold for the sparkling water,
And down below where the overflow drips
Into a clear little pool of bubbles,
Fresh spears of grass spring against the golden
column.

Oh, my heart is a little golden fountain
Fashioned purely for that leaping grace,
The luminous love of you.
Up through the column and over the golden basin
It thrills and fills and trembles in the sunlight,
Showering its gladness over and bestrewing
The golden fountainhead with rainbow rapture.

A Vilanelle

Autumn twilight turns pale gold
From sunset's halo at white heat
Upon the hills so dark and old.

Winter twilight's quiet, cold,
An amethyst with tints replete,
Autumn twilight turns pale gold,

While shining silver snows enfold
The amethyst in setting meet
Upon the hills so dark and old.

Spring's soft twilight seems to hold
An emerald in essence sweet,
Autumn twilight turns pale gold.

Summer twilight's brilliant, bold,
A ruby dropped from day's retreat
Upon the hills so dark and old.

Autumn joys are slowly told,
Lived, their passing all too fleet,
Autumn twilight turns pale gold
Upon the hills so dark and old.

Derelict

Far out from land, so very far away,
That naught seems possible except the sea
And sky and atmosphere at broad mid-day
Commingle in a marvellous mystery
Of watery depth in depth of greenish grey,

Far out from land, so very far away,
Where all is of the spirit of the sea,
And no sun shines through all the thick mid-day,
And nothing breaks the formless mystery
Of wet, wet air and sky of greenish grey,

Far out from land, so very far away,
There drifts a ship upon the silent sea,
And no one walks her decks at quick mid-day,
And no one furls her flag of mystery,
Or her damp, tattered sails of greenish grey,

Far out from land, so very far away,
There drifts a single ship upon the sea,
And in the wakeful night or at mid-day
No consort follows her in mystery
Of fellowship against the greenish grey,

Far out from land, so very far away,
I am that ship forlorn upon the sea,
Without my love I drift at drear mid-day,
Useless and lost in life's deep mystery
Into a vaporous fate of greenish grey.

Fairy Song

(From The Gate of Wishes)

When the night wind carries the tang of the woods,
Out on the hillside longing to be,
Where the elves do peer from their flower-leaf
hoods,
Who will go hunting, go hunting with me?

When the wild winds blow on darksome nights,
Up in the boughs of the gnarled apple tree,
Where the gnomes are smoking their little clay
pipes,
Who will go climbing, go climbing with me?

When the moon rides high mid warlock clouds,
Up in the air so far and free,
Where the witches are weaving filmy shrouds,
Who will go sailing, go sailing with me?

When the wind's wild spirit lures to roam,
Out on the country roads are we,
Where all vagabonds are at home,
Who will go roving, go roving with me?

Roundel of Autumn

To your dear eyes I turn from blue
Of autumn's deep, transparent skies,
From distant, purple-tinted view
 To your dear eyes.

The crows from saffron leaves arise,
And scintillating blackbirds, too,
From hedge to tree a bluebird flies.

All sights and sounds so softly woo
The sense and soul to mute surprise,
In glad content I turn anew
 To your dear eyes.

Essence

I sent my longing to you in a rose,
Its rosy lips a heart of white disclose,
Who could resist the rapture of its prayer?
But from your hand my rose unwelcome goes.

I sent my longing to you by a star,
A silver lily above the horizon's bar,
In silent twilight's golden ecstasy,
But back to me my star came from afar.

The sickle moon himself I sent to you,
A wistful little moon in dimsea dew,
Bearing my longing on his slim young knees,
Yet even the moon you shut from out your view.

And then I sent my longing by a bird,
Singing the same sweet music we had heard
When hand in hand we wandered in our woods,
Still you said no word, dear, never a word.

I summoned up my soft wind from the south,
The blessed rainy wind that scattered drouth,
And kissed you with a sigh and with a cry,
Did you not feel my kisses on your mouth?

At last I gathered all my messengers
Together, gave them all my poignant prayers,
To wind and bird and moon and star and rose,
But not a curtain of your castle stirs.

Desperate and sad they came back trailingy,
Bearing my longing unavailingy,
But, oh, beloved, essenced now with you
They are my exquisite joys unfailingy.

Sea-Breath

Oh, the blue of the sea
And the singing of the sea
And the savour of the sea
Are the color
And the music
And the fragrance
Of Love,
Are the beauty
And the breath
And the potency
Of Love.

Through the Months

I will bring you beautiful things in the new of the
year,

I will bring you a robin now ere the leaves appear,
Chill little bird in the tilting top of a tree,
Charming the cold away with his gracious cheer;

Grass to the tall round hills for you to see,
Beneficent green bestowed with a largess free
Up to the very rim of the spring-blue sky,
Radiant, grateful, and calm as a prayer may be;

Up a marvellous, rare ravine a meadow-lark's
cry,

Where their yellow, delicate green the willow trees
fly,

Dogwoods and fairy wild plums and red-buds rear
Their heads in a rapture of blossomy odors high.

I will bring you beautiful things in the full of the
year,

When you wake from sleep ere the tremulous day
grows clear,

A dawn like the fairest dream of a glad new world
When the shadows are evanescent, the colors veer,

And beauty supreme at last, like a flower unfurled
With its delicate petals forever outwardly curled,
Will open into the light of a perfect day
Swaying, all luminous, soft, and brilliantly
pearled;

Then, after the evening's magical, vaporous grey,
A vision of stars in their wondrously clear array,
When the kindness of God and of heaven seem
very near

And the way of truth an alluring and tranquil way.

I will bring you beautiful things in the wane of the
year,
Before the frost has come and the leaves are sere,
A day of gentleness, mellow and golden and fair,
When the wind is at rest from his riotous, romping
career,

On this Indian Summer day in its essence rare
I will give you a field all gleaned and homely and
bare

Save for those Indian wigwams, the shocks of corn,
Haunted and rustling and stiff in the radiant air,

And farther back where the flight of the crow is
borne,

I will give you a wonderful woods whose trees
would adorn

Many a tale of knights and of goblins queer
And of quaint little owls on their stiff little twigs
forlorn.

I will bring you beautiful things in the old of the
year,
When the cold is sharp and the spirit within is
drear,
I will give you a lavender sunset over the snow,
A heaven of holy colors blessing you here;

In the darkness of night when the four-times-forty
winds blow,
Those beings alive who so wildly fly to and fro,
I will find you trinkets wrought by the frost's white
fire
To glisten on stream and tree in the morning's
glow.

And whether the world without be of mirth or of
mire,
I will gather and store away while my hands never
tire
And bring you beautiful things through the change
of the year
For your heart's deep, holy content, your soul's
desire.

Triolet of the Wild Clover

In the wild sweet clover
Moonlight is streaming,
Crickets sing over
In the wild sweet clover,
Midnight! my lover
Lies deeply dreaming,
In the wild sweet clover
Moonlight is streaming.

God Give Me Strength

God give me strength!
Not to achieve
The greatest things in life,
Nor to pass by
In selfish contest others in the race for power,
Nor even to outrun them toward brave ends,
But that at length
I may relieve
A little of the care of human strife,
And satisfy
My longing to stand straight in trial's hour,
And comfort, joy, and trust to bring to friends,
God give me strength.

Reversal

I went into the woods one day
And there I met wee little Love,
He sang a pretty roundelay
About what I was thinking of.

He wore a gay new scarlet coat,
A crimson oak-leaf on his head
For cap, and round his fair soft throat
A chain of hawthorn berries red.

He was so fresh and rosy-fair,
So young, he took my hand with such
Content, that I became aware
Of all the dear joy of his touch.

He led me through the autumn woods,
We felt no chill, we felt no fear,
Though 'twas the end of summer moods,
Though 'twas the dying of the year.

I went into the woods one day,
Again I met wee little Love,
The branches all were sweet with May
And blue the fairy sky above.

But his poor little coat was torn,
Besmirched and faded, and his face
Was thin and sad and overworn,
And gone were all his strength and grace.

He cried and fled, from hour to hour
I followed him with bitter care,
He hid behind a tall May-flower,
But when I came he was not there.

The long day through he called to me,
The long day through from me he fled,
Till, white, beneath a white thorn tree,
I found him, at the moon-rise, dead.

Roundel

(From The Gate of Wishes)

In twilight glow we linger till
Our fire falls in, still burning slow
Upon the wooded ridge of hill
 In twilight glow.

Deep down a stream seems scarce to flow,
Our far-flown fancies have their will,
The brown glen swims with mist below.

The tawny saffron beech leaves fill
A background 'gainst which softly blow
Your tawny locks the ruddier still
 In twilight glow.

A Dream

The pale-gold twilight hour came with a dream,
A dream that in my hand lay jewels rare.
I marvelled at the heap of colors fair,
My slow eye kindled to the glow and gleam:
The lyric opal, emeralds that seem
Perpetual spring, pale pearls beyond compare,
Deep amethysts that holy lore declare,
And diamonds with their violet-tinted beam.
Then quietly you stood beside me, dear,
A cameo your face came into view,
From out the dusk, and then I felt the clear
And patient glory of your eyes and knew
That all the jewels in my hand were mere
Symbols of you, dear love, that they meant you.

In April

Lilac bushes with their tops abloom,
Robins in the clean cut grass,
Redbuds, redbirds,
Breezes bearing fragrance as they pass,

Blue above, below a river of blue,
So far away and yet so near, so dear,
Little leaves, grey leaves,
Like blossoms on the poplar trees appear,

Never grass so green in all the world,
There a bluejay, yes, and there a thrush,
Dandelions, violets,
April's breath on every hawthorn bush,

Can you breathe and still not feel the spell?
Can you listen and not hear the call?
Blossomscent, birdsong!
Well, I don't believe you then, at all!

Sweetheart, God finished up the earth,
I think, in April, called it very good,
Heaven blessed, heaven sent,
Yield, you must, to springtime's rapture mood.

Roundel of the City

The city lies in mystic veil
Of smoke and fog, a soft disguise
To blackened roofs where all so pale
The city lies.

With dreary pathos do the skies
In grey November clouds bewail
The truth that aureate autumn dies.

Then softly, suddenly prevail
The sun's gold rays, and quietwise,
Swimming in gold dust, happy, hale,
The city lies.

Pragmatism

Yesterday Truth was a rock
Of granite immutable
On which to stand, a bed
Unshakable on which to lie,
Our grandfathers uncomfortably believed, nor
questioned why.

Today on a hollyhock
Truth lights, an inscrutable
Changeling, now here, then fled
To another flower, a butterfly,
“Ephemeral insect truth!” our smiling children
cry.

In January

To amethyst the valley hollow deepens,
The western hills afar now seem receding
Into a sky of ruby, gold, and topaz,
While far above against the turquoise zenith,
Southward a line of numberless crows is flying.
The earth adorned with pearls of snow lies wait-
ing

That gracious moment heralding the twilight,
As if in very awe of her own beauty
She seems to hold her breath in listening stillness.
And my love's tender lips are close beside me.

Christmas Eve Lullaby

I rock thee and croon to thee,
 Little birdeen,
Wee little, soft little child,
The lambkins play merrily
 Out on the green,
But the wind, it is chill, it is wild.

I look far into thy twilight eyes,
 Oh, little dove of my nest,
And sing thee a song of the babe that lies
 Warm on his mother's breast.

The rose and the star of light,
 Lovely white dove,
Of the infinite world is he,
And the rose of the winter night,
 Symbol of love,
Is my wee little girl to me.

Ballade of Love in Autumn

You came to me when autumn sky
Was of the fairest, deepest blue,
Softer the clouds than in July
And in the grass late summer's dew;
Does time the seasons misconstrue?
For as a spring anemone
Sweet in October woodland's rue
My love comes back again to me.

You left me then without a sigh
When autumn days had come anew,
You listened never to my cry
But as the leaves fly so you flew.
My griefs did as the leaves accrue,
Nor could I ever from them flee,
Yet always wee hope scurried through,
My love comes back again to me.

You come when golden days defy
The autumn sunset's purple hue,
When many a pale, frail butterfly
Lights on the ironweed tall in view
Beyond our stile where May-flowers grew,
And I for sadness could not see
The joys that autumn still might strew,
My love comes back again to me.

L'Envoy

Dearest, the autumn airs endue
The hills with peace, in like degree
I have my happiness from you,
My love comes back again to me.

Ah, Take the Rose!

(Song from The Rose)

Ah, take the rose!

Its leaves uncloset

A thousand tender thoughts of thee,

Thy beauty rare, thy gentle grace,

Thy fair simplicity.

Ah, take the rose,

For with it goes

My love, my dearest love of thee,

And may it have a little place

Within thy memory.

Triolet of the Fairy Air-Ship

It's the daintiest ship,
A mere maple leaf,
For a fairy's trip
It's the daintiest ship!
See it flutter and dip,
Will it come to grief?
It's the daintiest ship,
A mere maple leaf!

Blue and Green and White

You would have me say how the wind in the wheat
 is blowing,
 Is blowing,
In the wheat sage-green and gleaming like wires
 and bending,
 Bending,
In full accord to the will of the wind;
How like glorious raiment of angels a cloud is
 shining,
 Is shining,
Against the benignant blue of the sky attending,
 Attending,
Always behind the drifting cloud,
Glorious fair-faced cloud forever drifting
Over a loyal, happily loving sky.

You would have me tell how our clean white road
 goes winding,
 Goes winding,
On down the hill that with deep green woods is
 bordered,
 Bordered,
Leaning kindly over the road ;
How into these woods a path overgrown is lead-
 ing,
 Is leading,
And through these woods the silence with birdsong
 accorded,
 Accorded,
All in the summer-green growth of the woods,
Path indistinct through the grass forever alluring
Under these old and tall and sheltering trees.

You would have me sing of a field where flowers
are growing,
Are growing,
Hawthorn bushes, white clover, and daisies bloom-
ing,
Blooming,
In this wonderful, hill-top, vacant field,
Where peace is forever staying and time is pass-
ing,
Is passing,
While far-away hills in their mystical blue are
looming,
Looming,
Up from the nearer valleys of green,
Peace on this hill in the green forever lying,
Looking up to the blue and the white of God.

Orion, the Triolet

You asked for a verse,
And I point to Orion,
A triolet terse
You asked for, a verse
That would sweetly rehearse
The dear love we rely on,
You asked for a verse
And I point to Orion.

With a Copy of Songs from the Dramatists

Begs a health, does Jonson rare,
 From thine eyes,
Fletcher never may forswear
 Thy lips' prize,
Sweet Will Shakspeare calls thee fair,
 Holy, wise,
Poets' posies pelt the air,
 Sweetness flies,
Then it's caught with agile care,
 With sweet sighs,
In these leaves, so I lay bare
 The disguise!
Since they all were writ of thee,
Take them with much love from me!

Peace on Earth

Oh, mind of all the world, give us again
Your bold philosophy, your knife-thrust truth, oh,
 give
Your rare intelligence, quick-flown, intuitive,
To all the striving, earth-clogged minds of men.

Oh, heart of all the world, give us once more
Your passionate compassion free from littleness,
Your ruthless tenderness blessed and to bless,
To all the selfish hearts who yet adore!

Oh, soul of all the world, give still tonight,
Your glorious joy in beauty, your life's fine melody,
Your hallowed beauty of joy, floating, divinely
 free,
To all the stifled souls that would delight!

The Young Irelanders

(With a copy of A Little Book of Celtic Verse)

Some things that are gentle and tender, some
things that are wild and strong,
The infinite softness of twilight, a wind without
let or control,
They have captured from evanescence and hold
in the thrall of a song,
We listen enchanted at evening when mists from
the valley uproll.

They think they are singing of Ireland, but they
are a little wrong,
The country roads never ending and the old men
taking toll,
The hills lying quiet at sunset to you and to me
belong,
Their elves are the folk of our dreamland, their
country our land of the soul.

The Garden of Dreams

In quiet of twilight wild plums on the hillside,
In violet twilight their blossomy spray,
Ineffable altar where breathless the spirit
Of spring and the wraith of desire delay.

In stillness of twilight a robin's shrill singing,
Trilling his tremulous pain of delight,
Wild song and incense of wild scented blossom,
And wild dreams as dear as the incoming night.

I wander again to the hill where we lingered,
With never a hope of seeing you, dear,
But as a poor ghost must return to its garden
Of home, for the home of my dreams is here.

The Spirit of Romance

Nature

From out the morning's mystery of mist
She glides adown a dewy mountain path,
Her tender cheek the rising sun has kissed
And blushes now the kisses' aftermath.
She seems a dryad of the maple trees,
The air about her tells of ferns and flowers,
It is her voice floats singing on the breeze,
Her breath that mellows air before soft showers.
The very spirit of the stream,
The wood, the cloud, the sunbeam's merry dance,
Elusive, shy, enchanting as a dream,
The soul of nature waking from a trance,
To one is pure romance.

The Spirit of Romance

Travel

For one she dwells in lands unknown, afar,
He crosses foamy seas and mountains high,
To seek her under distant deodar,
Nor nearer can he ever her descry.
He gazes in the green, translucent wave
That tosses, curls, and falls below his ship,
He dreams of her in secret eastern cave
And longs to press her warm and amorous lip.
Adventures in far lands alone
Will find the maiden that he loves, Romance,
To sail and wander always is he prone,
For her in dangerous wilds he must advance,
Nor ever fear mischance.

The Spirit of Romance

Story

By storied stream and ivied towers old,
Alone appears the spirit starry-eyed,
To him who dreams of deeds and warriors bold
And ladies fair that eke for love have died.
Through casements haunted by the lonely owl,
In mystic moonlight silently she glides,
Where lovers of their love did make avowal
And lordly knights once kissed their winsome
 brides.

In weird wood by darkling ways
Of the grim north, or in the south, perchance,
Where murmuring waters flow to placid bays,
Where ancient tales her witcheries enhance,
One meets the maid, Romance.

The Spirit of Romance

In All Things

As love she comes to one, to one as fame,
In shimmering draperies a radiant bride
To that, to this she is a glorious name,
Ambition's prize so long, so long denied.
With silent tread she walks in cloisters cold,
Anon she blows the bugle call to war,
With sacrifice she dwells, or glowing gold,
At hand one finds her, one must seek afar.
Where'er it be, her magic glance
To follow calls men and shall call for aye,
As once for her they bravely drew the lance,
So now and ever will they strive and die
For her, the witch, Romance.

Triolet of the Porte Cochère

Under the ivied porte cochère
We lingered very long together,
'Twas cooler there than anywhere,
Under the ivied porte cochère,
And vacant castles do not stare
At hearts as warm as summer weather,
Under the ivied porte cochère,
We lingered very long together.

God Bless Thee, Dear!

God bless thee, dear!

It is an old refrain,

Come from a creed long dead and lost to me,

Yet still I whisper it most earnestly,

With all the foretime force of love and pain,

God bless thee, dear!

And if there be a God? It were not vain

To ask him for a blessing upon thee,

To pray a largesse given lovingly,

A blessing sweet and soft as summer rain,

God bless thee, dear!

For could I fear disdain

From him, the giver, generous and free,

To me repeating unbelievably,

The prayer my heart must ever still retain,

God bless thee, dear?

And if I must remain
Unable still a distant heaven to see,
Yet since thou livest with faith and joyously,
Since thy true heart is pure of every stain,
God bless thee, dear !

The simple words are fain
Upon my heart and lips always to be,
Telling so sweetly and so tenderly
The old, old wish my love for thee would gain,
God bless thee, dear !

To —

As one who, walking through a flowered ravine,
Will see with eye discerning and will pluck
The sweetest of the buds with loving hand,
Working a subtle charm with sheerest touch,
Turning the buds to lovelier blossoms still,
So does she, walking down the path of life,
Perceive the buds of opportunities
And gathers them. They blossom in her hand
Into kind words and sweetly gracious acts,
Bringing to others joy and fairy gold.

Roundel of Loneliness

If you were here, dear love, I know
That dreariness would disappear,
The firelight wear a brighter glow,
 If you were here.

A violet moon in full career
Sails on through clouds the west winds blow
So silently from far and near.

The night and I long for you so,
I want the peace you give me, dear,
The happiness you would bestow
 If you were here.

Love Among the Chimneys

Overhead the stars are dim and quiet,
Pale behind the city's nearer light,
Far below the hill the city's riot
Harries the sane silence of the night.

Nearer is the never-ceasing splashing
Of the fountain in a little park,
Some one plays "The Palms" in technique dash-
ing
On a pianola in the dark.

Half a square away a strident street-car
Insolently hurries on its way,
Three dogs bark, the scent of a cigar
Falls upon this night in middle May.

From it all my spirit hides and cowers,
Longing for one joy, one dear delight,
Just to smell those fairy locust flowers
As they hang so near you in the night.

Fragment of Fairyland

“ You are a Scot,” she said and smiled at me
With sweetly taunting eyes,
“ You wear your prickly thistle cap-a-pie,
There’s never a disguise.”
“ But an American I chance to be,
Whoever that denies?
Of course my Scottish forebears crossed the sea,
They being very wise.
And are you French because in years long sped
Your great-great-grandma wore
A lily on her heart or pretty head —”
“ La fleur-de-lis — je l’adore?
Perhaps I do but I have often said
I love Ohio more.”
And then I had a thought I did not say,
Though it was sharply true,
There is a country fair and far away,
Its tenantry is few,
A hilly land of mystery and May,
Of windswept view,
It has no name, knows naught of night or day,
Nor either old or new,
Its emblem is a wild plum’s blossomed spray,
And from that land are you.

College Exams.

(With apologies to James Whitcomb Riley)

They all climbed up in the darkness dense,
Nine little goblins with green glass eyes,
Nine little goblins that had no sense
And couldn't tell teachers from men that are wise,
They all climbed up on my bed in the dark
And I thought they'd escaped from a Noah's ark.

The first one said as he scratched his head
With a finger that looked like a fountain pen,
"You think you're alive, but you'll wish you were
dead,"
And he scratched and chuckled and cackled and
then
I knew as my tongue grew dry and dumb
He was an examination soon to come.

And another one said as he winked an eye
That looked like the egg of a Katy-did,
"You don't know beans from a dragon-fly!
Because it's vacation, you think you are hid,
You ignorant ostrich, but just wait a few,
Your biology prof is a-laying for you."

And another one said as he wiped away tears
That proved to be really drops of red ink,
“ Woe to the student who jauntily jeers,
In the slough of exams he surely will sink ! ”
And I saw that his hand — and it made me sad —
Was only a queer shaped blotting-pad.

And another one moaned and groaned in pain,
For his face was never a face at all,
But a sheet of foolscap without a stain,
As blank as the blankest side of a wall,
“ Oh, dear, you’ll never dot your eyes
While you run to teas,” he wailed with sighs.

And they all careered up and down my frame
And sang a song of a dolorous tune,
But the words of each goblin were not the same
As those of his brother goblin’s rune,
And they crooned of college and profs and exams
Till I shivered and shook in dreadful jimjams.

“ We are the coming exams,” they wept,
“ You are having vacation and jolly fun,
But you’ll rue it all, you sluggard inept,
When your teachers have got you all on the run,
For they’ll grab you and pluck you and scare you
worse
Than a *pair* of nightmares hitched to a hearse.”

Easter Eve

We went to market,
She and I,
So grey the sky, so blue was I,—
And blue her eyes —
The sun he wouldn't shine,
She wouldn't smile!
The day before the Easter day
It was, a sudden day like May
Dropped down in austere April,
Yet all the dreary streets were grey,
Sahara dust blew up our way,
And she, my little love,
My rosy branch of blossomed May,
Would not be gay — nor would the sun!
We went into the market house,
No, not a house, but beauteous bowers
It was, heaped bank on bank with flowers.
Forgot were dust and skies of grey
In luminous colors.
Oh, were they
Now soft, now gay!
The gods of color had their way
And showed their power
In an exquisite flower,

Then in a mass of perfect things,
As if they said in their riotous strength,
" Oh, you banalities here of earth,
I will show to you
What I can do ! "

Colors of rose and pink and red,
Colors of blue, and of lavender bred
By the sigh of a cloud on a sunrise bed,
Colors as fair as the blush of a girl,
Colors of mauve and yellow and pearl,
Color until you saw and heard
And felt the fragrance of the word,
Color!

Roses and daffodils,
Lilies and jonquils,
Narcissus, tulips
Of white just kissed at the tips,
Pansies and peas,
Ferns for the plinths below hyacinths,
And yet it all — so magical —
Could not beguile a smile
To the eyes of my little love.
We left that marvellous market place
And went to the hills.

On the hills austere
There was scarcely a spear
Of grass and never a leaf,
And the winds blew strong and the winds blew
 cold,
Yet "Here we belong" her dear voice told
My heart, as we sat, hand in hand, on the mould,
And took our fill
Of the wonderful, patient, perfect will
Of nature over the hills.
We found a nook at the back of a tree
Where the wind was gentle as gentle could be,
The sun came out with a broad sweet smile —
My little love smiled the livelong while.
From our tiptop nook
We heard a brook
Below in the glen
Where the fairy men
Were at work on the violets hid in the leaves.
The birds came near with never a fear,
Over some trees was a deep rose hue
That meant the wee buds coming anew,
And the sky was blue — a *blesséd* blue
So deep it was — while across it sped
The fairy flying clouds.

The air was pure,
Oh, peace was sure,
The day before the Easter day
That bloomed from April into May.
We went to the wood
And found it good,
My little love and I.

The Cross

Though one may say if he had known
The cross he wrought with skillful care
Was for himself, and he alone
The weight of it would have to bear,

He would not then have wrought at all
Or made the thing so much the less
That he might wear it, light and small,
For ornament in jauntiness,

I do not wish my cross less great,
I blindly wrought as though I knew
My aching joy would be the weight
Of the enduring love of you.

Ballade of the Park in Winter

The black old town is garbed in white,
The new year's christening robe of snow,
And overhead the moon is bright
And all about no sharp winds blow,
Electric cars fly to and fro
As driven by a scolding fate,
And in the little park below
In moonlit snow the benches wait.

A warm delicious summer night
Was not so very long ago,
When lovers found their dear delight,
As lovers always seem to know,
And whispered words so fondly low
And lingered in the park so late,
But now the fountain's ceased to flow,
In moonlit snow the benches wait.

The tall iron gates are fastened tight,
Electric lights all grimly glow,
The leaves and robins took their flight
With autumn's silent overthrow,
But yet in uncomplaining woe
Behind the iron bars of the gate,
Where cold and desolation show,
In moonlit snow the benches wait.

L'Envoy

Lady, no more may lovers go
Into the park all desolate,
For winter nights sharp coldness strow,
In moonlit snow the benches wait.

Roundel of the Fireflies

The light of my night are the fireflies,
Each wee back with a star bedight,
That glows in the trees, then suddenly dies
 The light of my night,

Till over the hills the moon replies,
Himself a radiant round of delight,
Ascending the dusk of the summer skies.

Yet not beneath the wings it lies
Of fairy flies, nor in moonlight quite,
For I see in the depths of your luminous eyes
 The light of my night!

Mother Goose for a Philosopher

When I was very young I had a bosom friend;
We loved each other dearly
And we vowed most firm and clearly
That we'd love each other till the world should
 end.

But alas! we grew up, my bosom friend and I,
And along came a little man a-riding gayly by;
To her a kiss he blew
And after him she flew
And now she thinks no more of me than if I were
 a fly.

A proverb somewhat changed, I own, but culled
 from ancient lore,
Friendship goes out at the window, when love
 comes in at the door.

The Gnome Owl

(Verse written for a child)

In the hole of an oak sits an old gnome owl,
And the darkness hangs over him like to a cowl,
He's the priest of the forest, the monk of the
trees,

But ne'er in prayer does he fall on his knees,
We fall to our knees when we hear him growl,
A sound that's between a moan and a howl,
A sound that sounds like his name, gnome owl!
We tremble and shake as we lie awake,
And hear this old reprobate's voice on the breeze,
For he'll never shrive the sin of mistake,
Or of unbelief in the forest's decrees,
And the trouble and good that the little folk make.
He'll bite your nose off if you ever deny
That witches are riding their brooms in the sky,
That field mice will scratch up your legs in the dark
Of the night when you hear the werewolves bark,
If you scoff at the truth that pumpkins can fly
And apples can swim with the frogs if they try
Below the hill in the green, scummy lake.

If you follow the lead of this famous old fowl
You'll get to a wit that few men can see,
A cult that's as dark as the hole in the tree,
But it fascinates you and it fascinates me,
And at midnight we lie and shiver and shake
At the sound that this fearful old gnome owl can
make.

Roundel of the Twilight

In the west a wee gold moon,
Perfect in its pointed crest,
Dips to rose-light fading soon
 In the west.

All the birds have gone to rest,
One small sleepy vesper tune
Comes from out a robin's nest.

Sweet the wind blows with a boon
Coming as a welcome guest
From my love with roses strewn
 In the west.

The Little Thing

There came a little thing with sea-born eyes,
 Within my sight,
And hung about in silence, wistfulwise,
 From morn till night.

I said, " You little thing, if you will play
 About my feet,
Be happy and content you all the day,
 For life is sweet."

The little thing in ecstasy of love
 Played there apart,
But then it covetously crept above
 Unto my heart.

" Oh, little thing," I cried, " pray go away!
 You pain me! "
A voice that made me faint I heard to say,
 " You gain me."

“ But, Little Thing, you throttle me! ” I cried,

“ Let loose.”

“ I am now where I may not be denied

My perfect use.”

“ Oh, Little Thing, you’ve grown, you’ve come
inside,”

I wailed,

“ My heart is vanished, oh, the woe betide,

My life-blood failed! ”

“ Be quiet now and feel my potent grace,”

It said,

“ Your strength is gone, my love within its place

Instead.”

Tomorrow It Is April

Tomorrow it is April, my belovéd.
Outside the opened window
A soft grey sky left by the all-night's rain
Is crossed and barred
By innumerable limbs and twigs and stems
Burgeoning with leaf-bud.
My casement is a net of growing wood.
And farther off where a tall tree
Lifts its high young stems,
Begirt with bud,
Against the topmost heaven,
Begirt with bud and swelling nodes,
All like erect and vivified ropes of beads,
Stiff little standing rosaries of spring,
Off there among the branches three blackbirds
Are clearly cut against the soft grey sky.
Delicate tracery of tree and bird,
A twilight tracery of black and grey,
So warm and soft though seeming without color,
So warm and soft in cold and colorless March,
So warm and soft it breathes of violets
And daffodils and a sheer grassy bank
Where a little lone faun sits and pipes.

The air sways through my window shrill and
gentle,
A robin sings his twilight song
Full of the exquisiteness
And the despair of love.
Tomorrow it is April, oh, beloved.
Tender to tears is the first youth of love,
Nothing so piteously sweet,
So the first keen days of spring,
Awkward, austere,
Thrilling with joy until I close my eyes,
Are like to it,
Are like the poignant witchery,
The piteous maddening bite
Of young first love.
Tomorrow it is April, my beloved.

Stars

Star of the winter night,
Glint merrily,
Shine on my heart's delight,
Give her all glee!

Star of the winter night,
Tell her for me,
Stars are love's points of bright
Idolatry!

Alchemy

She is lovely and fair as a Christmas rose,
(Whatever that may be!)
But she can do what no rose can do,
She will do it for me, perhaps even for you,
However she does it 'tis Heaven that knows,
For 'tis heavenly alchemy,
She breathes in my heart a happy song.

In the twilight soft I wander along,
(It is sweet with the flowering clove)
Above in the west is a sickle moon
And a robin is trilling his twilight tune,
In the pale spring world there is never a wrong
Nor a flaw where the fairies chose,—
She has breathed in my heart a happy song
And in my hand there's a rose.

Juliet's Song

(From Entr'Acte)

Take not, dear love, away
Thy lips so sweet to me!
Dear is the night, oh, dark and wondrous dear
 with thee,
And far away the day.

Go not, my love, I pray!
In yon pomegranate tree
The song we hear, sweetheart, the song can only
 be
The nightingale's love lay.

No jealous, blushing day
Nor lark's song chiding me
For keeping thee, my only love, for holding thee,
Commands thee come away.

Oh, love, no longer stay!
Even I must bid thee flee,
Hark, hark, it is the lark, and in the east I see
The morning's rose and grey.

Oh, love, begone, begone,
It is the envious dawn,
Haste, dear, away!

Sublimation

(Sapphics)

Roses I hold with caresses,
Roses of rapturous beauty,
Roses still fairer than roses,
 Roses love-tinctured.

Twilight I look into thrilling,
Twilight of tenderest colors,
Twilight still sweeter than twilight,
 Twilight love-haunted.

Breezes I hear on the hillside,
Breezes of millions of wee flutes,
Breezes still softer than breezes,
 Breezes love-whispered.

Roses and twilight and breezes,
Fragrance and color and music,
Transcend their own perfect beauty
 Since you have kissed me.

Out of the Storm, Love

Outside the hail beat into the black dank mire
Like bullets from a wrathful chastening sky,
I laid another round log on my fire
And watched the sparks dart upward, flying high,
The fireflies of the fire.

The rain slashed madly thwart my window-pane
And flung among the treetops newly leaved,
The grey manes of the horses of the rain
Lashed forward then retrieved
The butterflies of leaves, in their disdain.

I leaned among the pillows of my chair,
The rising sibilant flames gave all the light,
The rug lay deep ensanguined in the flare,
Black shadows gorged the corners of the night,
My heart with its despair.

I thought upon my woods where yesterday
I gathered blue flowers, heard the oriole
And tanager upon a hawthorn spray,
Now where were they in all this hail and dole,
This winter night in May?

Where was that joy and color and that song?
I seemed to hear a knocking at my door,
As if the poor things in their utmost wrong
Came and begged, gaunt-eyed, " We implore
The love and care for which we live and long! "

Surely it was a knocking mid the roar
And screaming of the tempest all about,
Surely a something shook the handle of my door,
A living bird or flower stood without
In cold and trouble sore.

I opened wide my door, there stood a frail
And lovely little mite, hands on his head
To fend it from the angry pelting hail,
Eyes full of welling tears and big with dread,
A blossom beaten by the gale.

" Why did you come," I said, " my little dear?
Did you not know, could you not understand
I did not pray for you nor want you here? "
He only pressed his face against my hand,
I felt his tear.

To turn him out again I could not dare,
I shut the door and led him to the fire,
Dripping he leaned against my great arm-chair,
Little bare feet a-cold, besmirched with mire,
Blue eyes, with golden hair.

“ That other heart has turned me out,” he cried,
“ The other heart desiring all of me,
That held me close and would not be denied,
Has flung me out and hurt me cruelly
So that I would have died.”

For that I loved that heart where he had lain
I kissed his eyes, like those, upon my breast,
He whispered low, “ I bring you joy and pain.”
Outside the raving creatures knew not rest,
The horses of the rain.

A Reflection

We stayed out very late last night,
The moon, the lightningbugs, and I,
Alone and longing and alight
With all your hot love's alchemy.
Last night we stayed out very late
I and the lightningbugs and the moon,
While a wee black cricket beside the gate
Sang over and over a tireless tune.

I lay in my hammock, I stared through the trees
At beauties useless since you were gone,
I inept and fruitless as these,
I all alive, the full moon shone.
I shut my eyes, I heard the tune
Of the black little cricket beside the gate,
I heard the strange little Japanese rune,
I heard, " Oh, see ! " and I heard, " Oh, wait ! "

Oh, lover, my lover, you're gazing, too,
At the lightningbugs and the moon, and I
In looking at them am looking at you,
Beauties are there in the selfsame sky.
You throw me a kiss by way of the moon,
The moon is reflecting your smile! Elate,
I laugh at the lightningbugs and croon
The black cricket's song, for I see, I wait!

The Little Creatures

What are they,
All those little white creatures running to and fro?
Are they white mice?
But no, they are too small for mice,
And they can not be lice for they are larger and
far more active.

Is there such a thing as a white cock-roach?
Because, if there is, that is surely what they are.
No, you say, they are not exactly roaches,
Examine them and you will be able to tell by their
habits

What they are.
They run to and fro,
They scuttle away from the light,
They scurry off behind things and under things,
They run behind table legs and chair rollers,
They seek refuge under a book-case,
They slide into a crack
And lie there flat, hoping they will not be noticed,
In a flurry they make for a bureau or bed or wash-
stand
And secrete themselves beneath,
They burrow under the edge of a rug

Clinging fast with all their legs to the textile above
 them,
Suffocating, with their noses embedded in it.
If you rout them out, they flee, flee, flee,
Run and tear here and there,
Anywhere,
Over things and under things,
And through the narrowest spaces that almost
 catch and hold them,
For, being disturbed, they are bewildered, frantic,
Frenzied for shelter they seek whatever seems to
 them safest,
But they never get off the floor.
Now, what are they,
These myriads of miserable little white creatures
 running to and fro?
They are the little white souls of those who are
 afraid.
They scuttle away from a great blaze of light,
They flee from your gaze,
Mad with fear of what they do not comprehend,
They scamper from scrutiny,
They run in misery from the new, untried, the
 potent,

They cling to the refuge of man-made conven-
tionalities,
And if you rout them from these,
In a frenzy they seek others to hide in,
Spending their lives sticking to a conventional lie or
lying convention
Or running from one to the other.
They are not exactly roaches, no,
They are the unpleasant little white souls of
Those who are afraid.

Blue Are Her Eyes

Blue are her eyes,
Limpid and blue,
Blue as the sea.
Soft is her voice,
Liquid and soft,
Soft as the southwind
At twilight.
And the touch of her lips,
Ah, the touch of her lips
Who can tell?
For the touch of her lips
Is the fire of life
And the sweetness of death.

Rispetti

I

Wee leaves of silver-green against the blue,
Fluttering like sweethearts to the April wind,
A myriad poplar leaves quite fair and new
Born to an April world unspoiled, unsinned,

Trembling like lovers to the westwind's breath,
Madly in love with life, heedless of death,
So would I sail upon the westwind's might
East to my lover in the April night.

II

The yellow-green of willows in the glen,
The silver-green of poplars on the hill,
A dogwood white and blushing redbud, then
The wonder-working of the fruit-trees' will,

Lilacs and hyacinths in procession gay
Up to June's roses flute their way through May,
These are the lyric, fairy heralds, dear,
Of all my heaven on earth when you are here.

III

Beneath a waxing moon I had my birth
Near to the turbulent eve of Saint John's fires,
When June's rapturous roses strewed the earth,
With dawn and twilight breathing love's desires.

For, oh, my love, my life was set in tune
By that moonlit, passionate night of June,
And oh, my dear, I love the roses' hue,
With ecstasy I love the rose of you.

IV

Black poplar leaves against a wan, white sky,
The night wind's eerie, intermittent moan,
A cricket by the step, the moon, and I
In breathless July air are here alone.

With dreams of day the palpitant world is haunted,
By dread of storm the waiting night is daunted,
And I am haunted by your last hot kiss
And maddened by the dreaded loss of this.

V

Today I walk hot city streets where reel
The crowds, a foreign, negligible crew
Of ghosts that tread soft asphalt under heel,
And I, alone, am all alone with you.

Tonight I lie among the lilies' spray
Under a burning moon as white as they,
The August night has neither breath nor dew
And I, alone, am all alone with you.

VI

A blue bloom lies upon the far-off hills,
The golden afternoon is ripe and warm,
Each starry night September dew distils,
Madness has spent itself with summer storm.

Past is the passion-heat of summer mood,
Past is the passion-fever of the blood,
I lie and dream upon the warm hill-grass,
And watch a thousand blackbirds swarm and pass.

VII

The spring was fragrant with your coming, then
You held me to your heart one day in May,
I lived in rapturous happiness again
Until that tropic night you went away.

Oh, aching madness crystallized to peace,
Oh, perfect love sprung from desire's surcease,
Beneath October's great and quiet moon,
I go to you, belovéd, soon — ah, soon!

Concerning Love

How is the young heart then to know
What is the truth concerning love?
For one will say —
One that is a fat, little, bearded poet man
Reminding you of bread-and-jelly and patent
 leather boots
And other harmless unpoetic things,
Writing grandiloquently
Of faith and hope and bravery
And other such illogical beatitudes —
Such an one will shout
With smiling unction on his broad, round face,
Love is immortal!
Another poet writes —
An old man with bristling black moustache,
Sardonically smiling —
This one writes
That all loves die
Faster than narcissus in the spring and leave a
 ranker smell.
And yet another sings —
A dissipated Adonis with tousled hair,
Writing erotic verse in soft, deep strokes,

Telling one or two passionate details
That quiver and thrill in your sympathetic
nerves —

He sings in perfect form
That though he seeks various amours
He is rather true to one love after his fashion.
How is the asking young heart to know
What is the truth concerning love?

For another poet says —

A shadow of a woman
With eyes of fire and thin, soft, wrinkled skin —
She'll tell you that we die for love, one love.

Another, in neat ballades —

A rough-haired tramp, a scholar — he
In suavest pathos waves farewell
To a delicate sweetheart.

And yet another writes —

A man with grey face and weary eyes,
Who has thought much upon love and beauty —
This poet writes of his passions chronologically,
Moaning that always an old love haunts him
In the mad embrace of a new one.

One cries —

A crimson-hearted woman who plays with words
of love

As a hero might have played adroitly with a bat-
tle-ax —

She cries that whatever little bit of purity left in
her

Is from the white fire of her first and only lover.
And a golden-haired and very young god chants
bitterly

He will not love.

Ah?

And I say —

I that bear no brand of love

Nor of any experience whatsoever —

I say that one may love several times

And always differently,

Though one love is the deep love, the whole love,

The delight forever,

And new love may be the true love,

I say that I do not remember my past lovers as
lovers

But as bores or snakes — usually bores —

That I am oblivious to their past raptures
As to assuaging drinks of summers past,
And that the new moon of new love is always tender,
always marvellous.
How is the young heart then to know?

Fey

To the east a honey locust tree,
Behind her rose the moon fullblown,
Fullblown,
Still April night, white with the moon and sweet
With white blossoms,
I had your love.

To the west a leafless locust tree
Against a bloodred January sun
Setting in ashes,
Dead twilight gray with lacking light and bleak
With stark black branches,
I am alone.

The Poet's Whistle

All the color of cloud before twilight,
Crocus gold, iris lavender,
Ivory of eglantine, rose of wild rose,
All the fairy splash of running water,
Hoot of little haunting owl at midnight,
Bees and blossoms on the April hillside,
Ringing rapture of a valkyr's cry,
All the shrill mad grace of youth and spring,
These are some notes the poet's whistle plays us.

Seasons

When you left me I said in my red despair,
“ I can not bear the things I have loved with you ! ”
For the scent of garden pinks turned me faint,
And the swaying locust blossoms in the air
Poisoned my senses with their taste of an April
 night,
For the sight of the first robin in thin spears of
 grass,
Of a line of black crows against winter's lavender
 twilight,
Of a white winding road,
Of a red haw,
These silent, cognizant things maddened me,
And worst of all the music we had heard together,
The waltz song of the violins that brought your
 hand seeking, possessing, to mine,
Drove me sleepless into a wild labyrinth of plead-
 ing dreams.
But now, deadened, I smile with unfeeling lips, un-
 seeing eyes
At a denatured hillside with new grass and blos-
 soming apple-trees,
And wish that even pain might last.

Your Good Man

You say he is a good man?

Good?

I know he is not a murderer or burglar or drunkard,

I know he is not a burden to the state,
He does not break any federal or state law
Or any municipal ordinance or statute
Or any of society's moral customs,
He is very careful about law,

I know he conducts a thriving business
And makes a good living for his family
And gives to the church,
That he doesn't gamble and rarely swears,
That he pays his wife's bills without much grumbling

And sometimes nurses his children,
That he has no secret life or vices,
Your good man.

He does not lie exactly himself,
But his business advertisements are lies that make
the Navy advertisements seem pale,
His buildings were a fire-trap till the law compelled him to attach fire-escapes,
They are still filthy and full of germs,

He pays wages that barely keep body together,
much less soul,
He goes by a title he never earned, that gives a
false notion of respect,
He turns out inferior goods by his cheap process
And people who do not know pay him a high price,
He gives his wife money to buy toys for the children,
But he never gives his children a vision,
And he never gives his wife true mental companionship,
He stands for old laws, old customs, old moralities,
And it is as impossible to intrigue him by the new
As to scoop up Washington monument into an airship,
He is dangerous because you can not trap him,
Because there are millions like him,
Because he believes in himself,
He is the Sisyphus stone to social advancement,
His is the sort of nature Christ found in the Pharisee,
And a sinner is not so retrograde to human progress as he.

Far-Away Song

Blue is the sky,
Blossoms are here,
Oh, Love of mine,
If you were near!

Divine is the day,
Heavenly the night,
Oh, Love of mine,
My far delight!

Yet since you *are*,
These things can be,
Oh, Love of mine,
Sheer ecstasy!

The Knot-Hole

I look through a little round knot-hole
In the tall tight board-fence
Separating me from my past,
And see a white road rounding down the hill,
On one side is high purple ironweed,
In a hawthorn on the other a brick-dust breasted
 robin
Flutes his cadenced sadness,
Dim wood-smoke is redolent,
And then
I feel you lean to me and kiss
The rough sleeve of my coat,
And then
I beat the tight board-fence
Till my knuckles are raw.

Dimsea Light

The crowd surges out of the theatres,
It trickles out of the stores,
Into the streets and along the streets
The stream of the people pours,
They hurry by ones, they loiter by twos,
They saunter by threes, a few,
And among them all and between them all,
Dances the love of you.
Above their hard hats and their ostrich plumes
And under each high-heeled shoe,
Over and under them all, my dear,
There is the love of you.

It's the end of autumn, the end of day,
There's a gay little tang in the air,
October has murmured in mask of May
But the jester, Sir Frost, is here,
I sing to myself a wee Scotch song,
For nobody cares what I do,
Nobody notices me in the throng,
But I have the love of you.

The round red rose of the world goes down
In the west at the end of the street,
Here at a corner a crone sells flowers
Where lover and lover meet
Far from the springtime's violet paths,
But whether in dust or in dew,
Over it all and under it all
There is the love of you,
Under the arc lights, under the noise
And over the stars in the blue,
Over and under it all, my dear,
There is the love of you.

The Golden Bowl

I stand upon the broad and rounded summit
Of a high hill
In the full golden flood of an October day
Nearing to twilight.
Below lie bouquets of woods, flat fields,
White strings of roads winding like fairy tales into
the distance,
All steeped in sapphire mist like the blue bloom of
grapes.
Nearby a scarlet creeper trails a fence,
Nearer a hawthorn tree
Drops its wee crimson apples into the lush green
grass.
I stand with head thrown back,
Seeing and breathing deep,
My arms stretched out, in my two hands
I hold a golden bowl.
Luscious fruits fulfill the yellow lustre of its hol-
low sphere,
Fruits like great gems,
A pear of russet topaz, a ruby peach,
A cluster of grapes —
Amethysts from the dewy cave of night —

A sapphire plum, a garnet apple, emerald nectar-
ine,
And on them lies a rose.

Oh, empty golden bowl I call my soul,
Filled now with the precious fruits of life and time,
Topped with the rosy spray of grace,
A rose,
As though dropped to me from the sky above,
A crowning thing,
Love,
I lift and hold you out,
An offering,
And close my eyes.

Northern Dawn

Taps, scratches, pecks,
Little iterant knocks,
Clawings, hammerings,
Swift little run-away treads,
Taps, scratches, pecks,
Repeated a million times
On the porch-roof outside my window
Till I lie with wide-open eyes,
Wrathful against the small marauders of dawn,
Blackbirds, a swarm of them,
Fain of their junketings,
Cackling, insistent.
I fling tacks at them and they fly
Off to the pines. Then away.
They are gone. It is still.
Fulfilling stillness of great spaces,
The statued stillness of the strong north,
Huge, haunting stillness of the northern gods.
The lake lies like a smooth blue lily,
The islands sleep.

Fair, still — fair, still,
The wonder of beauty sways like unuttered music
in the air.

Then — oh, the sudden charm!
A pair of wild ducks flying straight and swift,
Out of the sky they come, close, and closer,
In their perfect speed,
Till, just as above my head they pass,
I hear the song of their wings,
The splendid vibrant swish of beating wings.
In reverence I turn my face to beauty
As a Mahometan turns toward the East
And prays.

Song

(From A Modern Masque)

Violets growing few,
Cometh the rose,
Daylight is going by,
Soon will the twilight sky
Half-moon disclose
Still in the buoyant blue
Over the dreaming dew.
Beauty forever nigh,
Joy waits anew.





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